A Struggle for Excellence

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF
THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

1871-1971

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proving the health of individuals and the community is the Association's heritage and its contribution.

It has been said that in order to know where one is going, one must know where he has been. Time blurs the images of men and leaders of men and the problems they faced in their day. But, it is by understanding our own history that we can better prepare for the future, and at the same time appreciate the great efforts in building the present cultural achievements of organized medicine.

The course of the Association was charted in the Preamble of the Constitution adopted at the first meeting.

"This Association was formed for, and is devoted to, the developments of the science and art of medicine, the conservation and protection of the public health, and the betterment of the medical profession which, by frequent scientific meetings, may have increased the opportunity for the exchange of knowledge. . . ."

On January 31, 1871, the seven founders of the Association wrote into Article II of the original Constitution and By-Laws, the following:

"The objects of the Association shall be:

"First—The cultivation and advancement of the Science of Medicine by united exertions for mutual improvements and contributions to medical literature.

"Second—The promotion of the character, interests and honor of the fraternity by maintaining the union and harmony of the regular profession of the county, and aiming to elevate the standard of the medical education.

"Third—The separation of regular from irregular practitioners.

"Fourth—The association of the profession proper for purposes of mutual recognition and fellowship."

During the past century there have been no deviations from these basic principles. The records show some disagreements in methods, and clashing of personalities over the mechanics of structuring these into a lasting organization, but the principles have been held inviolate because they have been adaptable to marked changes occurring in science and human affairs as the years rolled along. Granted, the records are not complete—some have been lost, some were destroyed unwittingly at the time, and other pertinent data probably were not considered sufficiently important at the time to note. Some of these might have enhanced the Association's story by giving insight into the thinking of members and officers as they created their programs, but the Association's history must be based upon what is known and not what might or might not have been waylaid.

The doctor-patient relationship that today is being threatened by the spectre of compulsory health insurance and the resulting manipulation by public or quasi-public agencies, the rising popularity of professional liability cases pursued in the courts by patients easily led to believe that the physician is omnipotent and should be able to cure all ills at all

All gussied up and out for a spin in this old-timer. Identities unknown.